

Message Text

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ORIGIN EA-12

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INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03
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APPROVED BY EA:RHOLBROOKE
EA/VLC:FZBROWN
HA:FSIEVERTS

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 066207

BANGKOK FOR CHARGE ROBERTS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDIP, MILI, SHUM, CASC, LA, US

SUBJECT: AMERICAN MIA'S IN LPDR

REF: VIENTIANE 49 AND PREVIOUS

1. ASSISTANT SECRETARY HOLBROOKE TESTIFIED MARCH 14 BEFORE HOUSE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE SUBCOMMITTEE ON ASIAN AND PACIFIC AFFAIRS (WOLFF SUBCOMMITTEE) IN GENERAL OVERSIGHT HEARINGS. QUESTION OF POSSIBLE FOOD AID FOR LAOS WAS RAISED BY CONGRESSMAN BIELENSON, WHO SUPPORTED PROVIDING SUCH AID. CONGRESSMAN WOLFF EXPRESSED SYMPATHY FOR GENERAL IDEA OF FOOD AID FOR HUNGRY PEOPLE IN LAOS, BUT ALSO IN STRONG TERMS RAISED MIA ISSUE, ON WHICH LAO HAVE BEEN UNRESPONSIVE.

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2. WOLFF AND REST OF SUBCOMMITTEE URGED HOLBROOKE TO CONVEY TO LAO GOVERNMENT THEIR CONCERN ABOUT FAMILIES IN U.S. WHO HAVE NEVER FOUND OUT WHAT HAPPENED TO THEIR FRIENDS AND RELATIVES MISSING IN LAOS. HOLBROOKE PROMISED TO INSTRUCT CHARGE IN VIENTIANE TO CONVEY SUBCOMMITTEE'S CONCERN ON MIA'S DIRECTLY TO LAO ASAP AND TO REPORT TO

SUBCOMMITTEE ON LAO REACTION TO CHARGE'S DEMARCHE.

3. ACTION REQUESTED: THAT EMBASSY SEEK APPOINTMENT FOR CHARGE ROBERTS WITH LAO FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL AT HIGHEST PRACTICABLE LEVEL TO MAKE NEW DEMARCHE ON MIA'S. CHARGE SHOULD RECALL TO LAO OFFICIAL EMBASSY'S JANUARY 11 DEMARCHE ON THIS SUBJECT (VIENTIANE 49) AND PREVIOUS REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION WE HAVE MADE. CHARGE SHOULD ALSO REMIND LAO OFFICIAL THAT LPDR OFFICIALS HAVE IN PAST TOLD US THEY ARE SEEKING INFORMATION ON AMERICAN MIA'S AND WOULD REPORT TO US ON WHAT THEY FOUND.

4. CHARGE SHOULD NOTE THAT DEPARTMENT HAS NOW INSTRUCTED HIM TO MAKE THIS NEW DEMARCHE ON MIA'S AT SPECIFIC REQUEST OF HOUSE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE'S SUBCOMMITTEE ON ASIAN AND PACIFIC AFFAIRS. THE HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE HAS REQUESTED DEPARTMENT OF STATE TO CONVEY TO LAO DIRECTLY EXPRESSION OF CONGRESSIONAL CONCERN ABOUT FATE OF AMERICANS MISSING OR KILLED IN LAOS. IT IS HOPE OF AMERICAN GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE THAT LAO GOVERNMENT CAN SUPPLY US WITH INFORMATION ON OUR MISSING MEN FOR THEIR FAMILIES AND FRIENDS IN THE UNITED STATES. CHARGE SHOULD EMPHASIZE DEEP CONCERN IN LEGISLATIVE, AS WELL AS EXECUTIVE, BRANCH OF USG ABOUT PROGRESS ON RESOLUTION OF THIS ISSUE. CHARGE CAN REPEAT THAT USG WOULD BE GLAD TO RECEIVE EVEN PARTIAL INFORMATION LAO MAY HAVE WHICH WOULD

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HELP US TO RESOLVE QUESTION OF FATE OF OUR MISSING MEN.

5. CHARGE SHOULD NOT REPEAT NOT OFFER ANY DIRECT LINKAGE BETWEEN PROGRESS ON MIA ISSUE AND POSSIBILITY OF FOOD ASSISTANCE. IF DRAWN OUT ON THIS SUBJECT, HOWEVER, CHARGE MAY RESPOND THAT PROGRESS ON MIA MATTERS WOULD BE OF ASSISTANCE IN IMPROVING ATTITUDES IN AMERICAN CONGRESS TOWARD LAO APPEAL FOR FOOD ASSISTANCE. CHARGE SHOULD NOT REPEAT NOT LINK ISSUES DIRECTLY OR INDICATE TO LAO THAT PROGRESS ON THIS ISSUE WOULD ENSURE FAVORABLE RESPONSE ON FOOD AID REQUEST.

6. DEPARTMENT WOULD APPRECIATE RECEIVING FULL ACCOUNT OF LAO REACTION TO THIS DEMARCHE, WHICH WE CAN CONVEY TO WOLFF SUBCOMMITTEE.

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